

**June 13, 2006**

**Press Release** | Contact: Danielle Langone (202) 225-6416

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WASHINGTON, DC—A leading Jewish, pro-Israel group, Americans for Peace Now (APN), sent the following letter to Congressman Peter DeFazio thanking him for his vote against H.R. 4681, a bill that would impose sanctions against the Palestinian Authority. These sanctions would weaken and undermine moderate Palestinian interests, not just those connected to Hamas.

The Honorable Peter DeFazio  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2134 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

May 23, 2006

Dear Congressman DeFazio:

On behalf of Americans for Peace Now (APN) I want to commend you for your wise and courageous vote today on HR 4681. APN is the premier Jewish, Zionist organization working to enhance Israel's security through peace.

Everyone agrees that it is important to send a strong message to Hamas that terrorism will never be tolerated, and everyone agrees that there should be no U.S. assistance to the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority unless it undergoes a real transformation. This is a policy that, in fact, has already been put into place by the Bush Administration.

In the wake of the Hamas election, Congress had an opportunity to send just such a message to Hamas, with carefully crafted, focused legislation that clearly distinguished between terrorists and non-terrorists; supported Palestinian civilians, especially the more than 50% of the Palestinian population who are children; and provided a political horizon for Palestinian moderates who might one day re-emerge to lead the Palestinian people. Instead, Congress elected to use the Hamas victory as a pretext for imposing far-reaching sanctions, many of

which are unrelated to Hamas, terror, and security, and many of which conflict with the interests of both the U.S. and Israel. As an organization deeply committed to Israel and the quest for peace and security in the Middle East, we cannot help but strongly oppose this wrong-headed and reckless approach.

While supporters of HR 4681 tried to portray the bill as a simple and necessary measure to cut off U.S. aid to the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority, even the most cursory reading of the text of HR 4681 makes clear that the bill goes far beyond dealing with Hamas. Rather, it seeks to permanently limit, constrain, bar, or condition virtually every facet of U.S. relations with the Palestinians, even at the risk of endangering U.S. national security, strengthening extremists, and undermining key U.S. interests. The Administration has deemed HR 4681 fundamentally flawed - a description with which APN is in agreement.

We applaud your courageous vote on HR 4681, and we urge you to continue to reject efforts to translate frustration with the current situation into legislation that will only make the prospects for peace more distant.

Sincerely,

/s/

Debra DeLee  
President & CEO  
Americans for Peace Now

Lara Friedman  
Government Relations Director  
Americans for Peace Now